

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01

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R 141908Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2230

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY OSLO

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 21096

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, FR, PO

SUBJECT: FRENCH LEFT MEETS ON PORTUGAL

1. SUMMARY. MARATHON 6 HOUR MINI-SUMMIT HELD AUGUST 13 BY SIGNATORIES OF COMMON PROGRAM (PSF, PCF AND RADICAL LEFT) COULD REACH NO MORE COMMON POSITION THAN TO PLEDGE TO WARD OFF A RETURN OF "FASCISM" IN PORTUGAL AND FAVOR A GOVERNMENT WHICH RESTS ON THE LARGEST POPULAR WILL DEMOCRATICALLY EXPRESSED. AT SAME TIME, JOINT STATEMENT READ AFTER MEETING NOTED THAT THE THREE PARTIES HOLD DIFFERENT APPRECIATIONS ON THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL. MEETING AND BRIEF, VAGUE COMMUNIQUE SUCCEEDED IN HIGHLIGHTING DIFFERENCES MORE THAN COMMON POSITIONS, NOT TO MENTION ANY AGREED COURSE OF ACTION. THE PARTIES DECIDED TO

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REMAIN IN CONTACT BUT SET NO DATE FOR ANOTHER MEETING.

END SUMMARY.

2. POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE PCF HELD A SPECIAL MEETING ON AUGUST 11 ON THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION AND ISSUED A STRONG STATEMENT ATTACKING THE RECENT WAVE OF ANTI-COMMUNISM DIRECTED AGAINST INDIVIDUALS AND PARTY OFFICES IN PORTUGAL. STATEMENT CONTINUED THAT ALL THOSE -- AND NOTABLY THE LEADERS OF THE PSP -- WHO GAVE THE SIGNAL FOR THE ANTI-COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN CARRY A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF "FASCIST" ACTIVITIES. THE PCF POLITICAL BUREAU WENT ON TO APPEAL TO ALL DEMOCRATIC FORCES, COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS, OTHER PROGRESSIVE FORCES, UNIONS AND THE MFA TO CARRY OUT THEIR UNITED ACTION IN THE FACE OF THE "FASCIST" OFFENSIVE. IT ENDED BY PROPOSING A MEETING WITH ITS PARTNERS OF THE COMMON PROGRAM.

3. LAST WEEKEND AND EARLY THIS WEEK SHOWED RISING CONCERN IN PRESS AND IN PARTY CIRCLES AT INCREASED VIOLENCE IN PORTUGAL AND RESULTING FEAR OF ANARCHY OR CIVIL WAR. NEXT DAY, AUGUST 12, AFTER FRANTIC EFFORTS TO JUDGE PUBLIC SENTIMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARTY LEADERS, TWO OTHER PRINCIPAL PARTIES OF LEFT ACCEPTED PCF INVITATION TO MEET ON PORTUGAL. MEETING TOOK PLACE AT PCF OFFICES ON AUGUST 13 WITH FOLLOWING REPRESENTATION: FOR PCF, ROLAND LEROY, MEMBER OF PARTY SECRETARIAT AND MRS. MIREILLE BERTRAND, MEMBER OF POLITICAL BUREAU; FOR PSF, JEAN POPEREN AND LOUIS MERMAZ, NATIONAL SECRETARIES; AND FOR MRG, PIERRE BRACQUE AND GUY GENESSEAU, NATIONAL SECRETARIES.

4. LENGTH OF MEETING, TWICE AS LONG AS ANYONE EXPECTED, MAY BE ATTRIBUTED TO FACT THAT SECOND LEVEL REPRESENTATIVES HAD LESS FLEXIBILITY THAN THEIR PRINCIPALS (MARCHAIS, MITTERRAND AND FABRE) WOULD HAVE HAD IF THEY CAME THEMSELVES. HOWEVER, THE PRINCIPAL REASON WAS DIFFICULTY OF RECONCILING VERY DIFFERENT POSITIONS HELD BY PCF ON ONE SIDE AND PSF-RADICALS ON THE OTHER.
A) PCF STARTING POINT WAS PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL MARCHAIS' PRESS CONFERENCE OF AUGUST 8 (PARIS 20696)

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AND POLITICAL BUREAU STATEMENT (PARA 2) WHICH ESSENTIALLY SOUGHT TO MOBILIZE FRENCH LEFT AGAINST "REACTIONARY FORCES" IN PORTUGAL BY REFERENCES TO ANTI-COMMUNISM, FASCISM AND MASSACRES.

B) PSF POSITION WAS OUTLINED IN LETTER FROM MITTERRAND PRESENTED BY PSF REPS TO PCF IN WHICH HE: FIRST DENOUNCED THE VIOLENCE DIRECTED AGAINST THE PCP, THEN STATED THAT "ERRORS OF JUDGMENT" BY THE PCP HAD LARGELY

CONTRIBUTED TO THE PRESENT CRISIS, LISTED SEVERAL ACTIONS BY THE PCP WHICH HE SAID WERE ONLY SOME OF THE POINTS ON WHICH THE PSF INTENDS TO SHOW ITS TOTAL DISAGREEMENT AND CONCLUDED REITERATING HIS EARLIER STAND FOR A UNIFIED GOVERNMENT BASED ON UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AND A CALL TO THE PARTIES AND MOVEMENTS ENGAGED IN THE PORTUGUESE REVOLUTION TO DEFINE A COMMON

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AGREEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE STEPS TOWARD A SOCIALIST SOCIETY.

C) MRG (RADICAL LEFT) ALSO EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN OVER THE ENTIRE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL AND ITS HOPE THAT A REAL DEMOCRACY BE ESTABLISHED WHERE UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE, LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION AND POLITICAL PLURALISM WOULD BE

RESPECTED.

5. SHORT, TERSE COMMUNIQUE, ELABORATED SEPARATELY BY RESPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS, GIVES INDICATION OF EXTENT TO WHICH POSITIONS ARE STRONGLY HELD, TOUGH BARGAINING AND LACK OF FLEXIBILITY IN MEETING. TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWS:

"CONCERNED OVER THE SERIES OF VIOLENCE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, OF WHICH THE LATEST DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE NORTH

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HURT THE COMMUNISTS IN A PARTICULARLY ODIOS WAY, THREE PARTIES, WHICH HAVE DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE ORIGIN AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL, ARE NOT ANY LESS IN AGREEMENT ON INSISTING ON THE URGENCY FOR DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN THAT COUNTRY TO FIND WAYS OF COMING CLOSER TOGETHER AND COOPERATING. THE PS' THE RADICAL LEFT MOVEMENT, AND THE PCF WITHOUT WISHING TO INTERFERE IN INTERNAL PORTUGUESE AFFAIRS FEEL THAT IT IS INCUMBENT ON THE PARTIES AND MOVEMENTS INITIALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONDUCT OF THE APRIL 25 REVOLUTION TO WARD OFF ANY RETURN OF FASCISM AND TO SEE TO IT THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ORGANS OF POLITICAL LIFE AT VARIOUS LEVELS REST ON THE LARGEST POPULAR WILL DEMOCRATICALLY EXPRESSED. THE RADICAL LEFT MOVEMENT; THE PCF, AND THE PS HAVE DECIDED TO REMAIN IN CONTACT TO FOLLOW THE EVENTS."

6. IN PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT, MITTERRAND ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 13 HIS SUPPORT FOR JEAN DANIEL, EDITOR OF NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR, LEFT LEANING WEEKLY, IN HIS LIBEL ACTION AGAINST COMMUNIST DAILY L'HUMANITE. L'HUMANITE HAD THE DAY EARLIER ACCUSED DANIEL OF "PREPARING PUBLIC OPINION FOR A REPEAT IN PORTUGAL OF WHAT HAPPENED IN INDONESIA 10 YEARS AGO - WHILE HIS WEEKLY MAKES AN ODIOS JUSTIFICATION IN ADVANCE OF POSSIBLE MASSACRES OF COMMUNISTS." MITTERRAND'S STATEMENT WAS ALSO SIGNED BY CFDT LEADER EDMOND MAIRE AND NUMEROUS OTHER LABOR AND POLITICAL FIGURES. IF DIVISIONS AND BAD TEMPERS WERE NOT OBVIOUS ENOUGH DURING AND AFTER MINI-SUMMIT MEETING, MITTERRAND'S TIMING AND LANGUAGE IN ISSUING THIS STATEMENT WILL SERVE AS A REMINDER THAT HE IS NOT IN A COMPROMISING MOOD WHEN DEALING WITH ISSUES LIKE POLITICAL PLURALISM AND DEMOCRATIC RULE.

7. COMMENT: PRESS HAS BEEN DOMINATED FOR LAST WEEK BY NEWS ON PORTUGAL AND THE PCF, WHICH HAS COMMITTED ITSELF ON THE SIDE OF PCP, REACTED IMMEDIATELY BY INTERPRETING THIS NEWS TO IMPLY A THREAT OF RETURN TO FASCISM. ACCORDINGLY, THE CALL OF THE 13 AUGUST MEETING SHOULD

BE SEEN BY A PCF ATTEMPT TO GIVE CREDIBILITY TO ITS
INTERPRETATION OF THE PORTUGUESE SITUATION AND THUS
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RELIEVE PCP OF ANY RESPONSIBILITY THEREFOR

8. PREDICTABLE FAILURE TO MOVE VERY FAR DURING 13
AUGUST MEETING IS ANOTHER DEMONSTRATION OF PSF DETERMI-
NATION TO HOLD ITS LINE FOR UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE AND
DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM IN FACE OF PCF TACTICS AND
IDEOLOGY. HOWEVER, PRIVATELY PSF LEADERS AT VARIOUS
LEVELS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT GROWING CHURCH ROLE
IN NORTHERN PORTUGAL LEST THIS LEAD TO A SITUATION
WHICH WOULD LEND SUPPORT TO PCF VIEWS CONCERNING
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THAT COUNTRY.

9. GOF MEMBERS OF THE MAJORITY, WITH VERY FEW
EXCEPTIONS, HAVE REMAINED SILENT -- NO DOUBT GLOATING
OVER OPPOSITION PROBLEMS AND DISUNITY.

10. AS SITUATION DEVELOPS IN PORTUGAL, WHETHER TO THE
RIGHT OR TO THE LEFT, IT WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE
PRINCIPAL FOREIGN POLICY IRRITANT BETWEEN PSF AND PCF
FOR WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD.

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